

my whole career is that no Senator can hope to succeed without the help of an amazing team of staffers who get you through the day, sometimes merely get you through the hour. Another truth I have learned is that there is never an easy way to say goodbye.

Today, both of those truths come together as I say goodbye to one of my most trusted staffers, my amazing communications director, Justin Goodman.

It is hard to remember the days before Justin was a part of my team. Like so many on my staff, he first joined the office as an intern back in the summer of 2009, where he quickly demonstrated his talent, his dedication, and his knack for communications, which was obviously totally an alien concept for me, shy as I might be.

A couple of years later, Justin returned to work at the DPCC as a full-time member of my staff, and I am sure even he had no idea what kind of roller coaster he was in for in the years to come.

Indeed, when he first joined my team as a full-time staffer, Congress was in the midst of a brutal government shutdown, and he had to wait 3 whole weeks before being able to come to the office or get paid. What a way to start. Well, that was his introduction to the Schumer operation. And every day since then has been an absolute joy—for me at least, maybe not always for him.

Over the years that Justin worked on my team, from his years leading the DPCC to working as my national press secretary, to serving as my communications director, he has become one of the people I lean on most to get through the day. To call him indispensable would be an understatement. One of the things I am going to miss is dialing 55 on my cell phone about 50 times a day.

To describe Justin as one of the most decent people I know doesn't even begin to touch it. So let the record show that Justin began his time on my team in the midst of a shutdown and now departs as we finish one of the most successful sessions in recent memory. It is a pretty great record, if you ask me.

So, Justin—I don't want to look at you because I will get a little weepy. So, Justin, thank you so much for your work over the many years. My best to you. My very best to your loved ones and your new little ones. And I don't think I need to tell you that you will always, always, always be part of the family here in "Schumerland."

I yield the floor.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

#### MIDTERM ELECTIONS AND NEW SENATORS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, last week, our narrowly divided country

went to the polls and elected a narrowly divided Congress, including a very narrowly divided U.S. Senate.

The next couple of months will see a number of long-serving Senate all-stars taking retirement, but today we are getting to welcome and meet our new soon-to-be colleagues on both sides of the aisle as the new Senators-elect arrive here in the Capitol for orientation. Among their ranks are an all-star lawyer and leader from Alabama, the attorney general from the great State of Missouri, the Lieutenant Governor of Pennsylvania, a businessman and best-selling author from Ohio, and three distinguished Members of the House of Representatives.

Exactly 25 years ago, in remarks welcoming the new Senate class of 1996, Senator Robert Byrd told them that service in this body is both "a supreme honor," "a serious responsibility," and "the highest political calling in the land." The famous student of the Senate's rules and history, our former colleague from West Virginia concluded that "as long as the Senate retains the power to amend and the power of unlimited debate, the liberties of the people will remain secure."

So, Mr. President, it is a high bar to earn the trust of one's neighbors to represent them and fight for their home State here in this Chamber. Each of our soon-to-be colleagues has cleared this high bar. I am proud to welcome members of what will be the 118th Congress freshman class. I hope sincerely that each of our incoming colleagues will embrace the honor of this immense responsibility. Of course, our half of the Chamber hopes that, even after this week, we will be not quite through with welcoming new Senators.

Democrats' unforced policy errors over the past several years have hit working families in the State of Georgia especially hard. Under one-party Democratic control in Washington and one-party representation here in the Senate, the Peach State has paid an especially painful price.

Since President Biden took the oath of office, Georgia families have watched prices rise nearly 15 percent. They have shelled out hundreds of extra dollars every month just to foot the bill for the massive, reckless spending binge their two Democratic Senators pushed through with deciding votes. Needless to say, this completely avoidable Democratic inflation tax put Georgia workers and small businesses in a heck of a bind.

"It's absolutely murderous," one man in Columbus, GA, told reporters. "Food, gas prices. Inflation is awful."

Of course, it didn't have to be this way. The people of Georgia's Senators didn't have to vote in lockstep with Washington Democrats to overheat our economy with reckless spending. Georgia's two Democratic Senators didn't have to vote for the \$2 trillion in inflationary spending. They didn't have to vote for hundreds of billions of dollars

in leftwing climate policies. But every single time that the hard-working people of Georgia have needed a check and balance, their Democratic Senators only gave them a rubberstamp. When Georgians needed their Senators to stand up with independence, they just fell in line.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

#### NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the 2023 National Defense Authorization Act. I want to talk about essentially three big issues: the importance of the bill, what is in the bill, and the cost of the bill.

The first question is—and when I used to appear before the Maine Legislature, the first question always was: Why are you here? What is the problem?

Why is this bill so important? It is important because the essence of our defense policy since World War II has been deterrence, and deterrence means maintaining the capacity to inflict unacceptable costs on any potential adversary and the will to impose those costs if necessary.

What we are really talking about in the Defense Authorization Act is the capacity; that is, what is it that we have at our disposal that can impose costs on our potential adversaries such that they will refrain from aggression and initiating a conflict—a conflict which, in this day and age, would be catastrophic.

Why do we have a defense bill? Why do we have a defense establishment? Why do we have ships and airplanes and space capability? In order to deter possible aggression.

Why is this important?

I am just finishing a book by William L. Shirer called "The Collapse of the Third Republic." Everyone knows Shirer's great book "The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich." This is a subsequent book that he wrote in the late sixties about the French Republic and the relationship between France and England to Germany in the early days leading up to World War II. The central message or rather one of the central messages of the book was that the failure of France and Germany to deter and meet the aggression of Hitler early in the period leading up to World War II, as early as 1936, led to the conflagration of World War II.

I would urge anyone who questions this assumption to Google: Rhineland, 1936; Sudetenland, 1938. Those were places where Hitler could have been stopped, and not with an enormous expenditure or investment of troops or materiel, but by an almost token resistance from the Western European powers, which they utterly failed to do. Then we had the rearmament of the Rhineland; the takeover of the Sudetenland, Czechoslovakia; and, of